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Soviet Hits Expulsions

Top Aide Says U.S. Is Impeding Summit

By John M. Goshko
Washington Post Staff Writer

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 25—U.S. refusal to modify an expulsion order for 25 members of the Soviet U.N. mission is as great a threat to a superpower summit as is the status of American reporter Nicholas Daniloff, a ranking Soviet Foreign Ministry official said today.

"In your eyes, Daniloff is the obstacle; in our eyes, this order is the obstacle," Gennadi Gerasimov, spokesman for Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, told reporters.

Gerasimov also implied that time is running out on efforts here by Shevardnadze and Secretary of State George P. Shultz to break the impasse.

Shultz, who is to return to Washington Friday, plans to be here again next week. But Gerasimov noted that Shevardnadze is to depart for Ottawa Tuesday and added, "So there is a sort of a deadline."

Speaking with reporters this evening, Shultz said he would like to resolve the situation before Shevardnadze leaves but does not think that "it's a good idea to put yourself up against a deadline dependent on someone's travel schedule."

Shultz said of the expulsion order: "It's something that has been done, and there it stands. We don't have any plan to change that."

Later tonight, Shultz and Shevardnadze held their third meeting in three days. After the session, which took place at the U.S. mission here and lasted about an hour and 45 minutes, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said that "the Daniloff issue is still not resolved." He would not elaborate.

In a move that appeared to strengthen the administration's demand for a sharp cutback in the Soviet mission, the Senate passed by voice vote Wednesday an intelligence authorization bill containing an amendment stipulating that the size of the mission "shall not substantially exceed" that of the U.S. mission unless the president determines otherwise.

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.), the Senate intelligence committee vice chairman who cosponsored the amendment, said "substantially" means that the Soviets' mission must be "close to" the size of the U.S. mission, "maybe one-third more."

The United States has a 135-member U.N. mission and has ordered that the Soviets reduce theirs to 218 by Wednesday and 170 by April 1988.

Gerasimov's comments today seemed in line with reports that the Soviet Union has offered to release Daniloff, apparently without an espionage trial, if the United States modifies or rescinds the expulsion order.

Repeating the Soviet position that the United States has no right to expel U.N.-accredited diplomats without specific cause, Gerasimov said, "We are not asking for relief. We are asking for reconsideration."

"We can proceed with the trial of Daniloff. We think we have strong evidence against him," Gerasimov said. "But we don't want to aggravate our relations."

"There are several bumps on the road to a summit," he said. "This road must be smooth because several dignitaries are going up that road. It is not smooth now."

He identified the "bumps" as Daniloff's situation, the status of accused Soviet spy Gennadi Zakharov, awaiting trial in New York City, and the order for the 25 Soviets to leave the United Nations by Wednesday.

"If we have not removed this 25-people case, we are going to have another obstacle . . . that will be the Soviet retaliatory measures," Gerasimov warned. "We are sure we are going to have some retaliation."

In response to questions about whether these situations are linked, he said: "All these cases are separate cases." He also said they could be dealt with "separately."

He stressed repeatedly that all "are obstacles standing in the way of a summit. There are several options for resolving them, all of them good. It is up to the Americans to decide which is better."

Non-Soviet East-bloc sources have said a Soviet proposal, reportedly made to Shultz Tuesday, tied Daniloff's release without trial to a U.S. retreat on the expulsion order. The Soviets also were reported willing to release several dissidents, including some Jews, but it was not clear whether that would occur before or after Zakharov's trial.

The West German newspaper Bild said today that Daniloff would be included in an East-West exchange of prisoners soon in Berlin.

"I don't know why he must use a bridge in Berlin," Gerasimov said, referring to the report. "If this is settled, he can take the first flight home. Pan American comes to Moscow now."

Gerasimov refused to comment on what retaliatory steps Moscow might take if the United States remains unyielding.

Staff writer David B. Ottaway contributed to this report.

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